



# CALTRANS NEWS RELEASE

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**District:** District 2 - Redding, [www.caltrans2.info](http://www.caltrans2.info)  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SAFETY PROJECTS SHOW PROGRESS IN COLLISION REDUCTION

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation has completed five safety projects on the two-lane portion of State Route (SR) 44 in Shasta County since 1999. Two of those projects were constructed more than five years ago and show an 80 percent reduction in accidents.

Project improvements ranged from realigning the roadway to flattening or straightening vertical and horizontal curves, widening of shoulders enhancing the recovery zones, added passing lanes and left turn lanes and improved sight distance. The department anticipates a similar reduction in collisions at the most recent project areas between Ponderosa Way and Dersch Road west of Shingletown.

“Caltrans has worked hard to improve safety on the State Route 44 corridor in Shasta County,” said Interim District Director Brenda Schimpf. “Two more safety projects are planned including a curve improvement project west of the Lassen Volcanic National Park and a shoulder widening project approximately eight miles east of the Hat Creek Rim.” The projects will begin in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

Since 2000, this segment of SR 44 has experienced a 25% downward trend in accident rates, in part due to significant engineering improvements. Other important efforts include those of the California Highway Patrol for their enhanced enforcement programs and the Shasta County Injury Prevention Coalition and the Shingletown Highway 44 Safety Committee and their educational awareness programs.

The \$3 million Top of Buckhorn project on a 0.6 mile segment of SR 299 that begins at the Shasta County line began this summer. This safety curve improvement project will reduce the

number and severity of collisions along this segment and greatly improve this section of the highway.

The Top of Buckhorn project is one of several planned construction projects slated for the Shasta County side of the Buckhorn Grade. Beginning in 2009 travelers will see construction at two sites near the bottom of the Buckhorn Grade. The Yankee Gulch project abuts the western end of the previously improved alignment at Crystal Creek. The Bottom of Buckhorn project is approximately two miles west of the Yankee Gulch project. Both projects are curve improvement projects that will help reduce the number and severity of accidents along this portion of SR 299. Although separate, these projects contribute to enhancement of the Buckhorn Grade.

An additional curve realignment project on SR 299 located west of Round Mountain at Fountain Curve was completed in December 2007. This \$6 million project eliminated three curves near the fountain and improved sight distance on a 1.2 mile portion of the highway.

"Caltrans will continue working to improve the safety and operations on state highways. The department encourages ongoing driver education (knowledge of laws) and enforcement (to promote adherence to laws), as they are key elements in making the roadways safer," added Schimpf.

For more information on the project, please call the Public Information Office at 530-225-3260.

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